

TOWN OF LANESBOROUGH SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Submitted by Diane Stevens, Town Secretary

May 5, 2016

Present: Mr. John Goerlach, Chair
Mr. Robert Ericson
Mr. Henry Sayers
Mr. Paul Sieloff, Town Manager

Warrants: Warrant Signed

The meeting was opened by John Goerlach at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment

None.

Permit(s) / Contract(s) / Use of Town Property or Notification to Town of Community Event / Appointment(s)

Berkshire Gas – Road Opening Permit – 28 Baker Street

Motion 16-057. Motion made by Henry Sayers to approve the Road Opening Permit for Berkshire Gas for 28 Baker Street with the conditions set forth in the Memorandum from DPW Director William Decelles dated May 4, 2016, seconded by Robert Ericson. Motion carried 3-0. [#1]

Police Officer James Rathbun – Notice of Impending Retirement

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with notices from Officer James Rathbun of his intention to retire during the 2018 Fiscal Year (after July 1, 2017 but prior to June 30, 2018). Mr. Goerlach would like to speak with Town Counsel before accepting the letter as it is the third time this Officer has submitted for retirement. The Board agreed. Mr. Ericson stated that the time span is too lengthy and needs to be shortened. Mr. Sieloff asked Chief Sorrell for his input. Chief Sorrell stated that he would speak with Officer Rathbun about giving advance 3 months' notice. [#2]

Chapter 90 Proposed Roads – Stormview Road, Orebed Road, part of Sunrise Street, Prospect Street

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with a revised letter from DPW Director Decelles relative to Chapter 90 projects. Mr. Sieloff discussed the changes made by the DPW Director per the direction of the Board at their prior meeting. Mr. Goerlach asked if Prospect Street will be on the list for next year. Mr. Sieloff stated that it would be #1 road for next year. Mr. Sayers would like to see Old State Road placed first on the list. Mr. Sieloff will inform the DPW Director. Mr. Goerlach agreed. Motion 16-058. Motion made by Henry Sayers to approve the Chapter 90 projects list as presented, seconded by Robert Ericson. John Goerlach abstained from vote. Motion carried 2-0. [#3]

Vote on Selectmen's Budgets

Mr. Sieloff reviewed the proposed updated budget with the Board. Mr. Sieloff stated that the targeted increase to the budget was 1.8% not including the debt exclusion. Mr. Sayers asked about the stipend for the Fire Department Chief. Mr. Sieloff stated that this was approved by the Finance Committee. Mr. Sayers believed that the other members of the Department should be paid if the Chief is being paid. Mr. Goerlach agreed with Mr. Sayers. Mr. Sayers would like to set aside \$10,000 for other members of the Department. Mr. Sieloff stated that it was brought to his attention that at a Town Meeting several years ago Town Counsel had concerns with paying a volunteer department. Mr. Sieloff will check into this and get back to the Board. Mr. Sayers asked if the ambulance is self-funding. Mr. Sieloff said it was. [#4]

Operating Budget

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with proposed budget modifications for the Selectmen's Budget via a spreadsheet dated 4-25-16, for their review and approval. Motion 16-059. Motion made by Robert Ericson to adopt the Town Manager's recommended budget with the changes on the spreadsheet dated April 25, 2016 with the following corrections: That the Mount Greylock Regional line item be \$3,074,789.00; and that \$10,000 be transferred from landfill monitoring and added to the Fire Department stipends, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0.

Capital Budget

Mr. Sieloff stated that this budget has not yet been finalized.

Ambulance Enterprise Budget

Motion 16-060. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve the Ambulance Enterprise budget as presented, seconded by John Goerlach. Henry Sayers abstained from vote. Motion carried 2-0.[#4]

Sewer Enterprise Budget

Motion 16-061. Motion made by Henry Sayers to approve the Sewer Enterprise budget as presented, seconded by Robert Ericson. Motion carried 3-0.[#4]

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Sieloff presented a draft Annual Town Meeting Warrant to the Board. Mr. Sieloff reviewed the proposed Warrant Articles with the Board. Mr. Sieloff stated that Article 3 proposes changing the Cemetery Commission and the Planning Board from elected to appointed positions. Mr. Sieloff stated that this change can be proposed by the Board but would be placed on the ballot for the next election. Mr. Sieloff stated that this was done with the Sewer Commissioners and the Tree Warden last year. Mr. Goerlach would like Articles 3 and 4 removed from the proposed warrant. Mr. Sayers stated the Board could let the residents decide. Motion 16-062. Motion made by John Goerlach to remove Article 3 (have elected Cemetery Trustees be appointed positions) from the proposed Annual Town Meeting Warrant, no second. Motion failed. Motion 16-063. Motion made by John Goerlach to remove Article 4 (have Planning Board members become appointed positions) from the proposed Annual Town Meeting Warrant, seconded by Robert Ericson Motion carried 3-0. Mr. Sieloff stated that Article 11 was discussed a two year ago to help fund the purchase of future Town's fire trucks. Mr. Sayers would like to remove Article 11 from the proposed Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Motion 16-064. Motion made by Robert Ericson to remove Article 11 (to transfer \$20,000 from Free Cash into the Fire Truck Expenditure Stabilization Fund) from the proposed Annual Town Meeting Warrant, seconded by Henry Sayers Motion carried 3-0. The Board also agreed to add language to Articles 12, 13 & 14 stating "with or without trade." The Board did not support the borrowing of \$80,000 for the purchase of a highway truck as proposed in Article 12. Mr. Sieloff asked the Board if they wished transfer the \$20,000 from Free Cash and authorize borrowing the sum of \$60,000 for the purchase of the vehicle. The Board agreed. Motion 16-065. Motion made by Robert Ericson to transfer \$20,000 from free cash for the purchase of a replacement highway truck and to finance the remainder, seconded by Henry Sayers. Mr. Sieloff and the Board discussed Article 15 (transfer \$8,000 from Free Cash to fund a study and grant application for a possible water system upgrade at Berkshire Village). The Board requested that this money be in the form of a loan. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would speak with Town Counsel to get the appropriate language for the Warrant Article. The Board approved the Article with language change. Mr. Sieloff stated that he was informed by a member of the Planning Board that Article 19 on the proposed Warrant cannot be accomplished without further investigation. Mr. Sieloff asked the Board if this was something they wished to pursue in the future. The Board agreed. Mr. Sieloff will speak with the Planning Board. Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that in order for area restaurants to serve alcohol before noon on Sundays for the purpose of brunch services the Town would have to adopt language from Massachusetts General Laws. The Board approved. Mr. Sieloff will get Town Counsel to give him appropriate language for the final Warrant Article. Mr. Sieloff stated that Article 21 was placed on the proposed Warrant to repeal the defective Docks Bylaw from the Town Bylaws. Mr. Ericson stated that he believed that the existing bylaw prevented people from building in the right of way. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would research this. Mr. Ericson also stated that he believed Harbormaster Lee Hauge used this existing Bylaw for enforcement purposes and asked what would be in place if the Board repealed it. Mr. Sieloff stated that State laws would be in place of this but he would speak with Harbormaster Hauge. The Board agreed to hold Article 21 for further discussion. Motion 16-066. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve Articles 1 through 20 with language changes and removing Articles 4 & 11 and holding Article 21 as listed on the proposed Warrant for Annual Town Meeting, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0. Motion 16-067. Motion made by Henry Sayers to recommend the Articles that have been placed on the Warrant at this meeting, seconded by Robert Ericson. Motion carried 3-0.[#5]

Ambulance Enterprise Fund Committee Bylaws

Mr. Sieloff presented the Board with proposed Bylaws for their review. Mr. Ericson would like to add that the EMS Coordinator and the Enterprise Fund Clerk shall be required to attend committee meetings. Motion 16-068. Motion made by Robert Ericson to approve the Ambulance Enterprise Fund Committee Bylaws with changes, seconded by John Goerlach. Henry Sayers abstained from vote. Motion carried 2-0. [#6]

Discussion on Ambulance Services and possible study

Mr. Sieloff stated that he is looking for a long term solution for ambulance services. Mr. Sieloff contacted the State and there are no services available. Mr. Ericson stated that due to the Town's size it is very difficult to maintain. P.J. Pannesco stated that Dalton is also having problems and it is twice the size of Lanesborough. Mr. Goerlach asked the Board if they would like to meet with other towns to discuss regionalization after the Annual Town Meeting. The Board would like to schedule a meeting. Mr. Sieloff stated that he is looking into having Town Hall employees becoming EMT's. Mr. Goerlach stated that they should not be police officers. Mr. Sieloff stated that one Town Hall employee has expressed interest. Mr. Sieloff stated that he is looking into hiring a laborer with EMT training for the Department of Public Works and possibly have another DPW employee be the driver of the ambulance. Chief Charles Durfee said that it is difficult to get day time shifts filled. Mr. Sieloff asked what Board their thought on hiring an employee with the DPW. Mr. Sayers would like to advertise that you can join the ambulance service without being member of the Fire Department. Mr. Goerlach would like to schedule a meeting with surrounding towns and fire department staff to discuss regionalization. Mr. Sieloff stated that he would set up this meeting for June 22. Mr. Sayers would like to open this up to all Town employees including Elementary School staff.

Reimbursement for Police Chief's unused vacation

Due to medical issues with several police officers, Chief Sorrell has been unable to take his vacation time. Chief Sorrell came before the Board and explained that the department is very short staffed and he believes he will be able to take some but not all of his vacation time. Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that the budget allows for the Chief to cash out 20 days. Motion 16-069. Motion made by Henry Sayers to approve the cashing out of 20 vacation days for the Police Chief, seconded by Robert Ericson. Motion carried 3-0. [#7]

Proposal to site Mount Greylock Superintendent's Office in Lanesborough Elementary School

Mr. Sieloff stated that as part of the new Greylock School project the Superintendent's office needs to be relocated. Mr. Sieloff asked Mr. Ericson if he could look into possible space at the Elementary School. Mr. Ericson stated that after reviewing drawings there doesn't appear to be much space. Mr. Goerlach asked if the library could be an option. Mr. Sieloff will place this item on a future agenda for Mr. Ericson to report back. Mr. Sayers spoke about the vacation village building and possibly renting it out.

Economic development and promotion

Mr. Sieloff informed the Board that the Town could be part of multiple town collaboration through Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to hire an employee to work on economic development. The Town's share would be \$24,000 a year to hire a staff member to work one day a week to promote new business. Mr. Sieloff asked the Board their thoughts. Mr. Goerlach believes it will take more than one person. Mr. Sieloff believes this would be a more productive way for economic development. Mr. Goerlach and Mr. Ericson are skeptical. Mr. Sieloff stated that this staff member would work in conjunction with a committee if one is formed. Mr. Sieloff stated that this person could also focus on grants. Mr. Sieloff stated that with the pipeline project not going through there is \$15,000 that was paid to Berkshire Regional Planning Commission that could be used towards the salary. Mr. Goerlach would like a Town committee formed. Mary Reilly asked what other towns were involved. Mr. Sieloff stated that Great Barrington, Williamstown, Clarksburg, Dalton, Adams, and Hinsdale have expressed interest. Mrs. Reilly liked the idea of hiring a staff member. Mr. Sayers also believes it is a good idea. Motion 16-070. Motion made by Robert Ericson to allow Mr. Sieloff to use available funds to hire an employee one day a week for the purpose of economic development, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0.

Other business which could not have been reasonably foreseen within 48 hours of the meeting.

None.

Selectmen's Items

Mr. Goerlach asked about the gate that was installed on Bridge Street. Mr. Sieloff stated that the DPW Director is conducting an investigation as to who installed it. Mr. Goerlach stated that a resident, Mr. Moriarty, wants the gate open until the Town finds out who installed it as it diverts vehicles on to his property. Mr. Goerlach asked about internet services. Mr. Sieloff stated that he had a discussion with Charter representatives yesterday and they are starting construction and he believes that before the end of the year there will be substantial changes with possible services available. Mary Reilly asked why the Board wants to change the Cemetery Commission from elected to appointed. Mr. Sieloff stated that certain committee positions require special expertise that is enhanced when committee members can be vetted by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Goerlach said that Mrs. Reilly could challenge the Board's earlier vote on the floor at Town Meeting.

Town Manager Report

Mr. Sieloff asked the Board when they would like to hold their next meeting which is currently scheduled for May 23rd. Would ask them to keep May 16th open if an additional meeting needs to be held.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Robert Ericson, seconded by Henry Sayers. Motion carried 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Footnotes:

- [#1] Road Opening Permit – Berkshire Gas – 28 Baker Street
- [#2] Police Officer James Rathbun – Notice of Impending Retirement
- [#3] Chapter 90 Memorandum – DPW Director
- [#4] Proposed Budget Spreadsheets
- [#5] Proposed Annual Town Meeting Warrant
- [#6] Proposed Ambulance Fund Committee Bylaws
- [#7] Police Chief Vacation Cash Out Request